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ABSTRACT

This book, originally published in 1970, reviews the history of intellectual freedom in American higher education from its origins in Europe to 1860. An introductory essay, by Roger L. Geiger, examines the strategic place of higher education in Hofstadter's work, and then reassesses the lasting contribution of the work. The first four chapters trace the persistent quest for intellectual freedom within relatively inhospitable settings. The first chapter examines the European heritage such as the role of faith and reason, science, and the emerging idea of toleration. The second chapter reviews the history of intellectual freedom at Harvard College from the mid 17th century to the early 18th century. The third chapter examines the American pattern of denominational sponsorship of small colleges which emerged in the mid 18th century. The fourth chapter looks at religion, reason, and revolution in discussion of sectarianism at Yale, Unitarianism at Harvard, the secularization of learning, and politics. The final chapter considers the American college from 1800 to 1860, and identifies a situation in which academic institutions were relatively barren intellectually. This situation is ascribed to the decentralized provision of collegiate education under the sponsorship of religious denominations and the resulting large numbers of small and weak institutions, chiefly concerned with preministerial and preprofessional education. (Contains 163 reference notes.) (DB)

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